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News Release

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BAINUM ALARMED ABOUT DIRECTION OF CITY BUDGET

HONOLULU—Councilmember Duke Bainum continues to be concerned about the direction of the City's Budget. "Throughout the more than 11 hours of budget hearings today, several important programs were cut, while others will not be funded. I voted against these changes to the budget, but I was not in the majority."

- The Budget Committee cut \$6,000,000 for the final phases of islandwide curbside recycling, despite this being approved by nearly 75% of the voters. "The environment needs it, the voters wanted it, and the Council should fund it. This is a critical element in dealing effectively with our solid waste stream."
- The Administration continues to press, and the Budget Committee approved, \$5,800,000 for new Rapid Transit salaries and \$1,100,000,000 for the Rapid Transit project despite no guarantees of forthcoming Federal funding and continued questions about the EIS process.
- Bainum expressed outrage, dismay and disbelief that the Administration continues to deny a hot lunch for our Summer Fun keiki. Instead, the Parks Department insists on substituting this meal with a smaller breakfast served earlier in the day. This is often, according to Bainum, the only hot and nutritious meal that these low-income children eat during the day. Councilmember Bainum actually funded the \$60,000 needed for this program, and the Administration refuses to spend it. Bainum added, "This is just wrong. Our children's health should come before spending money on the Mayor and his staff promoting tourism in the Mayor's West Coast tour and at the Las Vegas UH-UNLV game."

Bainum concluded that, "It appears our priorities have gotten lost along the way. We're using taxpayer dollars to take promotional trips to the mainland and paying brand new employees six figures per year, but not funding the basic needs of our neediest residents."

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